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The Commons had also some time of debate of the Garrisons to be dismantled, and which are to bee continued.

They also entred into a further progresse on Reputation of Religion, and in the pursuance of what we have formerly related, concerning those that preach without Orders.

There hath beene some false reports concerning the departure of our Brethren of Scotland; but what ever hath been suggested, the truth is, that they are peaceably departed out of this Kingdome, and are all to be disbanded, except a competent number to bee employed against Kilketto, and his Adherents, in the Mountaines of Scotland. Not long since Kilketto were with a great part of his Army were within 30 miles of Edenburgh, but hearing of the Scottish Army marching over Tweed are retreated.

The summe of this VVeekly Account is

The Parliaments Answer to the Kings Letter, and a Letter and new Propositions from the Marquesse of Ormond, for the delivery of Dublin into the possession of the Parliament; And the Order of both Houses of Parliament thereupon. An Ordinance past for the taking away of all Country-Committees. And the Vote of the House, what Forces are to be maintained for the safety of the Kingdome.

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18.

Severall

QVESTIONS

OF

Serious and necessary Consequence,

Propounded by the

Teaching Elders,

Unto M. IOHN COTTON of Boston in *New-England.*

WITH

His respective Answer to each Question.

LONDON,

Printed for *Thomas Banks*, and are to bee sold in Black-Friers on the top of Bride-well Staires, and in West-minster Hall, at the signe of the Seale. 1646.

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Certain Queſtions propounded by the teaching Elders in the Bay, to M. *Iohn Cotton* Teacher in the Church of *Boſton*.

Queſt. I.

WHat the ſeale of the Spirit is?

Anſwer.

The Seale of the Spirit is taken by ſome good Diviney to be the ſanctification of the Spirit, as that which like a Seale

1. *Diſtinguiſheth,*
2. *Conſenteth,*
3. *Confirmeth*

} the faithfull:

Others take it for the Witneſſe of the Spirit it ſelfe, as it is diſtinguiſhed from our Spirit, *Rom.* 6. 18. In which ſenſe it is commonly uſed by our Brethren in the Church: Though I my ſelfe doe generally forbeare to call it by that name, and do not uſually call it the *Witneſſe of the Spirit*, leaſt I might give offence to any, who may conceive the Seale of the Spirit to be more generall.

Queſt. II.

Whether every Beleever be ſealed with it?

Anſwer.

Every Beleever is not ſealed with the Seale of the Spirit, if the Seale be taken for the Witneſſe of the Spirit it ſelf, but in the former ſenſe, all Beleevers be ſealed with it.

Queſt. III.

What ground from the word of that Diſtinction, a Broad Seale, and the other Seale, and the difference between them.

Anſwer.

I know no ſuch Diſtinction between the Broad Seal and the other Seale: Nor was that Diſtinction propounded by any of our

Members, but by one of your ſelves, who expreſſing his conception in that Speech, one of our Members anſwered him according to his meaning in his own word, if you call it ſo, ſaith he; Nevertheleſſe thus much may truly be ſaid: There is a difference betweene the Witneſſe of the Spirit, as it regenerateth and reneweth our ſpirits; and the Witneſſe of the Spirit as it comforteth us with evident aſſurance of our *Adoption, Rom.* 8.16.

Queſt. IV.

Whether a man may or ought to ſee any ſaving worke of Chriſt in himſelfe, and take Comfort from it, before he be ſealed by the Spirit?

Anſwer.

A true Beleever may and ought to ſee (if it be declared to him in the uſe of the means) any work of Chriſt in himſelf that he accompanieth ſalvation (as *Cornelius* did) before he be ſealed with the witneſſe of the Spirit it ſelfe: yet full ſetled comfort he cannot take, nor reſt in, till it be witneſſed unto him by the Spirit: for Comfort without the Word is falſe Comfort, and neither Word nor Spirit, doe teach us to take any Comfort ſo much from the Worke of Chriſt in us, as from the Object of it.

Queſt. V.

Whether the teſtimony or Seal of the Spirit be ſo clear, as to witneſs immediately by it ſelf, without reſpect of any work of Chriſt in a man, & ſo conſtant, that it being once obtained, a man doth never after queſtion his Eſtate?

Anſw.

The Teſtimony of the Spirit is ſo cleare, as that it may witneſs immediately, though not without ſome work of Chriſt in a man, yet without reſpect unto the Worke: Nevertheleſſe it is not ſo conſtant or permanent, at leaſt not in all Beleevers) but that a man after he hath received it, may come in time of temptation to queſtion his Eſtate, though not ſo frequently nor ſo deſperately as before.

Queſt. VI.

Whether a Chriſtian may maintaine like conſtant Comfort in his ſoule, when he hath fallen into ſome groſſe ſinne, or neglected ſome knowne duty, as when he walked moſt cloſely with God.

Anſw.

A Chriſtian man cannot find like conſtant comfort maintained to

to his ſoule, after he hath fallen into ſin, whether of Commiſſion or Omiſſion, as when God keeps him in a cloſe walking with him: For the Spirit of God in him being grieved, (and grieved it is by any groſſe ſin eſpecially) it will not ſpeak wonted *Peace* and *Comfort* to him. If *David* fall into ſuch groſſe ſins, as *Adultery* and *Murder*, it cannot be, but the bones of his comfort will be broken, *Pſal.* 15. 8. Nevertheleſſe, the aſſurance of a mans good Eſtate may be maintained to him, when the frame and courſe of his ſpirit is growne much degenerate, *Iſai.* 63. 16.

Queſt. VII.

Whether a weake Beleever may not warrantably apply ſome promiſe to himſelfe as given by God, although he doth not yet diſcerne his intereſt in it by the Broad Seale of the Spirit?

Anſw.

A weak Beleever may warrantably apply ſome promiſe to himſelfe, and may have it alſo given him of God, even whileſt he is yet waiting for it, before he can diſcerne his intereſt in the promiſe, by the witneſſe of the Spirit it ſelfe: For the ſoule that waiteth for Chriſt, may come to ſee and know (by his renewed knowledge) that he doth waite; and may from thence conclude, that he on whom he waiteth, will not abſent himſelf for ever.

Queſt. VIII.

Whether a Chriſtian muſt of neceſſity have his firſt aſſurance from an abſolute, and not from a conditionall promiſe?

Anſw.

A Chriſtian mans firſt aſſurance doth ariſe from the Spirit of God, applying Gods free grace in an abſolute promiſe. Or if in a conditionall promiſe, it is not to workes, but to *faith*, and to faith, not as it is a worke, but as it revealeth the free grace of God offered, and applied in Chriſt Jeſus.

Queſt. IX.

What you meane by Chriſtian ſanctification, whether immediate acting of the Spirit, or infuſed Habits: *If habits infuſed, whether ſuch as are contrary to corrupt* Nature, *and all vitious* Habits: *and if ſo, whether you muſt not mean the Image of God in* Adam *renewed in us, to be our ſanctification?*

Anſw.

I meane by Chriſtian ſanctification, the fruit of the Spirit of

 Chriſt

Christ dwelling in true Beleevers, working and acting in us, both infused *Habits* and actions of *Holineſſe*, contrary to all vitious *Habits* and actions of corrupt *Nature*. And yet I do not mean, that the Image of God in *Adam* renewed in us (and no more then ſo) is our ſanctification: our ſanctification in Chriſt hath in it this more; Faith in the Righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and Repentance from dead Works, (and that which is the root of all) the indwelling power of the Spirit, to act and keep Holineſſe in us all, which *Adam* wanted.

Queſt. X.

VVhether this ſanctification being diſcerned by us, be not a true Evidence of Juſtification?

Anſw.

If this ſanctification be evidently diſcerned, it is a true evidence of Juſtification, *à Poſteriori*, as Juſtification is likewiſe a true Evidence of Sanctification, *à Priori*.

Queſt. XI.

VVhether ſanctification being diſcerned, may not bee, and often is a ground of Primitive Comfort, as it is an evidence of our being in Chriſt?

Anſw.

I doe not beleeve that this ſanctification being diſcerned, is a ground of Primitive Comfort, though when it is evidently diſcerned, it be an evidence of our being in Chriſt. I conceive our faith depending on Chriſt is as ſoon diſcerned, and ſooner then our ſanctification by Chriſt; and yet, neither will diſcerning of it yeeld ſetled comfort to the ſoule, till the Spirit of God doth witneſſe from Chriſt, Gods thoughts of peace towards him.

Queſt. XII.

VVhether when my ſanctification lyeth proſtrate, I may not prove my ſelf in a ſtate of Grace *by my ſanctification?*

Anſw.

If my juſtification lyeth proſtrate, that is, altogether dark and hidden from me, I cannot prove my ſelf in a ſtate of Grace by my ſanctification: For whilſt I cannot beleeve that my perſon is accepted in juſtification, I cannot beleeve that my works are accepted of God, as any true ſanctification.

Queſt. XIII.

Quest. XIII.

Whether evidencing justification by sanctification, be a building my justification on my sanctification: or a going on in a Covenant of Works.

Answ.

To evidence my justification by my sanctification, though it may seem at first blush a plaine and evident *Phrase*, yet is it indeed ambiguous, or at least obscure: Give me leave to cleare the sense of it, and then give you mine answer. To evidence my justification by my sanctification, is no more at first hand then to give or hold forth my sanctification for an evident Argument of justification. Thus farre the *Phrase* is plain. But now when I give it for an evident Argument, I may give it either for an evident cause or ground of my justification, or for an evident signe or effect of it. Again, when I give it for an evident sign of justification, I may either give it alone for an evident sign (having nothing els to shew for my justification) or I may give it for a concurrent signe, together with other signes and witnesses, which may make both my justification and my sanctification evident and cleare to my selfe and others. Having thus cleared the ambiguity and obscurity of the *Phrase*, I give you mine Answer distinctly in these severall *Propositions*.

Proposition. 1.

To give my sanctification for an evident ground, or cause, or matter of my justification, is to build my justification upon my sanctification, and to go on in a Covenant of Works.

Propos. 2.

To give my sanctification for an evident ground or cause of my faith, whereby I am justified, as when I doe not nor dare not depend upon Christ for my *justification*, till I evidently see my *sanctification*, this is also to build my justification on my sanctification, and to go on in a Covenant of works. For sanctification (or which is all one) good workes are not the cause of justifying faith; but justifying faith the cause of them.

Pro.

Propos.

To give my ſanctification for an evident cauſe and ground of my faith (not whereby I am juſtified, but) whereby I beleeve my ſelf to be juſtified (which they call the *Faith of Aſſurance*) this may be a building my juſtification on my ſanctification, or a going on in a *Covenant of works* two waies:

1. If the ſoule have no evidence of his dependance upon Chriſt for righteouſneſſe, nor no evidence of his effectuall calling unto Chriſt, and unto faith in Chriſt (by the Fathers drawing him to come to him) but onely he ſeeth an evident change in himſelfe, from a prophane and civill courſe to a ſanctified converſation; or at leaſt, upon that which is worſe, to wit, upon that which ſeemeth true Chriſtian ſanctification, which indeed is not, but a legal Reformation. For when a man hath been humbled under the Spirit of bondage by the terrors of the Law, yet he may never come to feel his need of Chriſt, nor his own inſufficiency or unworthineſs to receive him.

Though he may obtain { 1. Reſtraining grace to keep him from known ſinnes. 2. Conſtraining (or exciting) Grace to provoke him to duty (or elſe his Conſcience ſometimes terrified by the Law would flye in his face.

And though in this way he may finde comfort (as the ſtony ground did, and thorny ſoyle much more) and ſo from this great change hee may build up to himſelfe the faith or *Aſſurance* of his *Juſtification*, yet in truth, in ſo doing he buildeth upon ſuch a ſanctification which is indeed a ſandy foundation.

2. To give my *ſanctification* for an evident ground or cauſe of faith, whereby a man beleeveth himſelfe to be juſtified, may be a building of *Juſtification*, upon a *Sanctification* in another caſe: to wit, when we ſhall give a man no other ground or evidence of his *juſtification*, but onely from the evidence of his *ſanctification*: For the Publican did not (as the Phariſee thought himſelfe did) ſee any evident fruits of his *ſanctification*, but was deeply affected with the ſenſe of his ſinnes, ſo that he ſmote his breaſt with the Anguiſh of ſin, and durſt not lift up his eyes to heaven through confuſion of face for ſinne, but only cryed out to God to be mer-

ciſull

sinfull unto him in this sinfull estate: and yet by our Saviours own judgement, this man went home justified, rather then the other (Luk. 18.) though he saw no evidence of his *sanctification*, but rather Evidence of his sinfull corruption. If any of our brethren doubt hereof, I would pray them to call to minde what some of them that lived in *Essex* have heard our brother *Hooker* and Master *Rogers* also teach soundly, and argue out of the Word; that there be saving graces which are not sanctifying, but are wrought before *sanctification*, which yet may beare witnesse to a safe estate (and I may adde to Fellowship with Christ, for there is no safety but in him) before the soule can see any evidence of his *Sanctification*.

Propos. 4.

A man may give his *sanctification* for an evident ground or cause of his faith whereby he is justified, and yet sometimes not build his *justification* upon his *sanctification*, nor be under a *Covenant of workes*, but only sometimes go aside to a *Covenant of works*: As in case, when a man is truly justified, and seeth it not, he doth then betake him to his workes for the hastning of his *assurance*. As *Abraham* when he had long waited for the Promised Seed, thought he was justified by beleeving the free Promise: yet for the more speedy satisfying of his faith and hope, he turned aside to go into *Hagar* (who was a *Type* of the *Covenant* of *works*) for the hastning of his sight and fruition of the promised Seed; So there be sundry Children of *Abraham*, even of his elect Seed, that having been driven out of their sins by a Spirit of Bondage, and finding a need of Christ, and their own insufficiency and unworthinesse to receive him: do therefore seek and wait for him (by the mighty power of God) in every Ordinance and Duty. Such men are already truly justified, though it may be as yet they do not know so much, because this their seeking and waiting for Christ, in the sense of their own need & emptinesse, and unworthinesse, is a true act of a lively justifying faith. But now if such soules, because God may tarrie long, before they can see and feel Christ given to them, shall therefore seek Christ in their owne workes of *sanctification*, and in the promises and blessing given to such workes and not finding such workes, can finde no Peace nor *Assurance*: such soules, though they doe not build their *justi-*

 fication

fication upon their *ſanctification*; for indeed they were truly juſtified before, while they depend on CHRIST for righteouſneſſe, according to the free Promiſe of Grace, and ſo are truly under a *Covenant* of Grace, yet they goe aſide to a *Covenant* of *workes*, as unto *Hagar*, to bring forth to the ſight of Chriſt, the ſeed of promiſe, whom they ſo long waited for. The failing of ſuch ſoules is this, that they having Chriſt laid in their hearts, as the foundation of their *juſtification*, though they know not ſo much. Upon this golden and precious foundation they build hey and ſtubble, in ſeeking, and ſetling, and grounding their faith of *aſſurance* not upon Chriſt, nor upon the free promiſe of grace, nor upon the *witneſſe* of the ſpirit it ſelfe applying the ſame, but upon the holineſs of their owne workes. In which caſe they are often put to many and ſad doubts, ever and anon renewed upon them, till the faith and confidence, which they had built upon their own workes, be at length burnt up with the fire of temptation, and the clearer day-light of Gods Word and Spirit And then, though their owne workes and their owne building thereupon be burned, yet their ſoules will be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.

Propoſ. 1.

The ſoule that hath lyen under the terrors of the Law, and cometh afterwards to ſee and feele his need of Chriſt, and his owne ſtrength and worth to receive him, and doth depend upon Chriſt for *righteouſneſs* and *mercy*, he may come in his eſtate to ſee, by his renewed knowledge, his dependance on Chriſt, and withall ſome fruits of *ſanctification*, that flow there-from, as prayer, ſometimes, with unutterable ſighs and groanes, brokenneſs of ſpirit, mourning for ſight of Chriſt, longing deſire after the ſincere *Milk* of the word, love of the Miniſtery that wounded him, &c. And ſeeing God helping him here, he may thereby gather, that he that hath begun to help him, will go on to help him ſtill. But yet to give theſe for certain evidences of his *juſtification*, the poor ſoule dare not, though another Chriſtian of better diſcerning, may juſtly ſo apply to him as good evidences of his juſtified eſtate. But nevertheleſſe he will ſtill ſeek and wait for further and clearer fellowſhip with Chriſt, till the Spirit of God himſelf do witneſs to him, the gracious thoughts of God towards him in a

free Promise of Grace, before he can plead his own good works, (whether after Conversion or before) for good evidences of his *justification*. For (as it hath been observed by some of our godly learned Countrymen) the graces of Gods Spirit in our Soules, are like the Stars in the *Firmament*, which shine but with a borrowed Light from the *Sun*: If the *Sun* were hid from them, their Light would be obscure: so is the light of our graces, if the Spirit of God do hide his light from us.

Propos. 6.

But now if the Spirit of God do shew abroad his light into such a Soule, and give him a clear sight of his estate in a free Promise of grace in Christ; such a one evidently discerneth both his *justification* and his *sanctification*; and the one of them giving good Evidence to the other, the blood to the water, and the water to the blood, and the spirit to both, 1 *John* 5. 9. 8. And thus in evidencing his *justification* by his *sanctification*, he doth not build his *justification* upon his *sanctification*, nor hereby go on in a *Covenant* of works, nor go aside to it.

Propos. 7.

But though the Soule may gather knowledge of his estate, from such Evidences of *Sanctification*, yet if he shall therefore build his justifying Faith upon such evidences, he shall againe go aside to a *Covenant* of works, though his person may be under a *Covenant* of grace. For justifying Faith cannot safely build or rest upon any ground, save only upon Christ and his *Righteousnesse*.

Quest. XIV.

Whether a Christian be not further active after Regeneration, *then before, if there be a difference, wherein it lyeth?*

Answer.

A Christian is more active after *Regeneration* then before, before *Regeneration* we are not active at all in any spiritual Christian Action, no nor in *Proximam Potentiam*, Passive to receive helpe from God to do it, but after *Regeneration*, *Acti Agimus*. If wee act and go forth in the strength of our own spirituall *Gifts*, without looking up to Christ, we fall as *Peter* did, *Matth*, 26. 23.

Quest. XV.

Whether it be not a safe way to conclude my safe estate by my practicall Reasoning?

Answ.

Answ.

It is not an unsafe, but a lawfull way to conclude a mans safe estate by way of practicall reasoning, so it be, the reason be not carnall but spirituall. One Proposition being expressed in the Word, or safely deduced thence; the other being experimentall observation of a good conscience, enlightened by the Spirit of God, and looking up to Christ to cleare the conclusion from both. Nevertheless a good conscience will not satisfie himselfe in this way till it be established by the *witnesse* of the Spirit; or if it should so satisfie or rest it selfe for a season, God will awaken it in time, to a sense further need of Christ.

Quest. XVI.

Whether a Christian may not presse the Lord for spirituall Mercies, with Arguments drawne from the graces of Christ in himselfe?

Answ.

A Christian soule is more usually wont to presse the Lord for spirituall Mercies, by Arguments drawne from his owne spirituall miseries and infirmities, then from the graces of Christ in himself. Nevertheless the Saints do also make use of Arguments drawne from the graces of Christ, when they doe discerne the same in themselves, but they are usually such graces whereby they go out of themselves, and their owne *strength* and *worth*, (as faith, hope, desire, seeking, waiting, &c.) or such as doe expresse their spirituall bent and inclination, or affection, which they desire might be quickned and satisfied with their spirituall proper *Object* or end, but the force of their Arguments from those graces is fetched not from the force, or fulnesse, or power of them, but from the weaknesse and emtinesse of them.

Thus have you (according to your desire) a plain and short Answer to all your demands, except the thirteenth: which being exposed to greatest agitation and exception, I have spoken the more largely and distinctly to it; that so, I might avoid carefully, as I see it needfull, all suspition of ambiguity and obscurity.

Now the *God of Truth and Peace* lead us by his *Spirit of Truth* into all *Truth*, through *him*, who is made unto us of *God*, the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*, AMEN.

FINIS.

19.

GALLANT

NEVVES

FOR

LONDON.

FROM

His Majesties Royall Court at HOLMBY;

Wherein is set forth, three remarkable Passages, to be presented to the Citizens of London,

VIZ.

The
1. *Conceerning the Kingdome of* Ireland.
2. *Concerning General* Fairfax.
3. *Concerning the Kingdome of* England.

Printed & published, and to be presented, to the view of all His Majesties loyall Subjects, 1647. 1646